



California State Fire Marshal **CODE INTERPRETATION**

Date Issued	08-07-00	Interpretation #	00-010
Topic	Bars on Relocatable Classroom Windows		
Code Section(s)	§305.2.4, California Building Code (1998 ed.)		
Requested by	Marc Martin, Fire Chief Santa Ana Fire Department 1439 So. Broadway Santa Ana, CA 92707		
Prepared by	Joe Garcia, Division Chief (559) 437-1514		

SCENARIO: A relocatable school classroom is equipped with one door and two windows. One of the windows is located near the exit door and is covered with a security grille. The other window is located at the rear of the classroom and is equipped with a self-releasing device on the grille. The area outside of the rear window has been fenced for a distance of three feet to keep children away from the air conditioning units. The fencing includes a locked maintenance gate.

- 1. Is the rear window considered part of the exiting system? Does the window next to the door meet this criteria?**
The rear window is an emergency exit should the main exit be compromised. The window next to the door does not meet the criteria as an emergency exit nor the intent of the code section. The rear window should lead to a public way or to an area of refuge away from the building. Once outside the rear window, the exit discharge should be clear without locked gates.
- 2. Does the occupant load of the classroom dictate the requirement for the emergency exit window in the relocatable classroom?**
No. In this case, the fact that the windows have been barred negates the occupants' ability to exit the room readily through a window.

3. **Since this code section falls under the “special hazard” heading, does it apply to hazardous classrooms or to all classrooms?**

Section 305.2.4 applies to all classrooms that have bars on windows and do not have two exits on opposite sides of the classroom.

4. **If the occupant load is under the requirement for two exits, does the classroom need to be provided with the second exit/window? If so, does the installation of security grilles need to be approved prior to installation?**

Regardless of occupant load, all classrooms must be provided with a window. Section 305.2.4 applies if only one exit door is provided and the window(s) is barred. If security screens or grilles are installed during classroom construction, the installation must be approved by the Division of the State Architect (DSA). After the construction project has been finalized by DSA, the local fire authority should approve the plans prior to installation.